Make trade school choice warily

Private vocational schools may be a good means of obtaining practi-cal training in a specialized field or vocation. This education is designed to prepare students for entry level jobs in business and industry.

The skills learned at a vocational school may enable the unemployed to secure a job or the employed to secure a job or the employed to school may not should be selected to severe the end of the employed to though most vocational schools are reputable, the Better Business Bureau advises that some schools may not be able to fulfill a career-aspirer's expectations.

FOR EXAMPLE, some radio and television ads have enticed the un-suspecting to enroll in courses which supposedly lead to jobs upon graduation.

In one case a young man went to a vocational school for keypunch operator classes; the tuition was \$2,900 for a nine-month course. Ad-

missions officials assured him federal student aid funds could be used. Six months later the young man discovered his grant didn't cover \$1.200 of the cost. He also became dissatisfied with the choice of classes he was allowed to take so he dropped out. None of his money was refunded.

Other students.

Other students from the same Other students from the same school reported similar financial difficulties. One woman claims she was duped into borrowing \$1,300 from the school at 15 percent interest. Another woman said she signed a contract to borrow \$300 from the school and the next time she saw the form, the figure had been erased and replaced by \$2,000.

THERE ARE OTHER considera-tions in choosing a private vocation-al school. There are several ques-tions that should be answered first. Is the school accredited? Accredi-tation is given by various private agencies recognized by the U.S. Off-ice of Education and indicates that a school meets certain qualifications or standards.

Does the vocational school have an open-admissions policy? To avoid

the trap of paying for a course and finding out it is too difficult, check out the services available for students who may need extra here received in the result of the received in the result of the received in the receive

IT'S ALWAYS a good idea to visit the school. Talk with the faculty and find out their qualifications. Is there a high rate of instructor turnover? Talk to current students; their feedback could be beneficial.

Ask for copies of the school's course catalogs and any other descriptive information about the content of the lessons, audio-visual aids, instructional equipment, etc. Study this material carefully to see if the class offerings will adequately suit specific career objectives.

Don't forget to ask for the names and addresses of recent graduates. A reputable school will be happy to give this information. Contact re-cent graduates to find out if the

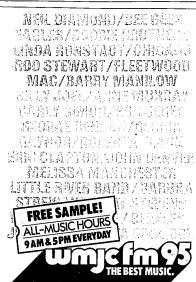
school really helped them in obtain-fing a job.
Also talk with the graduates' employers. Are they satisfied wit the graduates' work performance, Would they hire more graduates from the particular vocational school? How much money could a hired graduate expect to earn?

hired graduate expect to earn?

FINALLY, NEVER SIGN an agreement until it's throughly read and understood.

Make sure the total cost in the contract includes books, labs, equipment fees, graduation fees, etc. There should be no blanks in the contract and all promises should be in writing. The school's refund and cancellation policy should be clear. Find out if any tuition money will be refunded in case you become dissatisfied with the courses.

The Better Business Bureau advises interested sutdents to evaluate the credibility and suitability of a private vocational school before signing an enrollment contract. Doing some homework on the credentials of a vocational school before investing could mean a more satisfying education.









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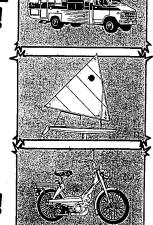




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